

GETTING PLACES WORKING

# Business development officer

Business development officers give advice and support to small businesses and people starting up. It means getting to know a client's needs and aspirations, and running workshops for those who want to develop their skills. You need to be good with people, then, and have a real commitment to helping them succeed. Business development officers come from all sorts of backgrounds, including sales and customer service. A business-related degree or A-level is good to have, as is knowledge of running a business. Perhaps you've managed an office or worked closely with the boss. If not, don't worry, you'll be trained on the job.

## Good courses

The majority of universities and colleges of higher education offer business and management degrees.

Look for courses that are recognised or accredited by professional bodies, such as The Chartered Management Institute; The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development; The Chartered Institute of Marketing; or The Chartered Institute of Management Accountants.

Courses available include:

- Extended business degree scheme (University of Portsmouth)
- BA (Hons) Business (University of Durham)
- BSc (Hons) Business Management (University of Surrey)

## Facts and figures

### Starting salary

Between £20,000 and £30,000 in London.

### Working hours

Normally 9-5, and around 35 to 37.5 hours a week.

### Days' holiday per year

25 days per year.

### Skills and experience

It helps if you have a general knowledge of running a business. This need not be your own company - you may have helped a relative who is in business, or had a position in a business that has been close to the boss (for example, as an office manager in a small business or personal assistant to the boss).

### Would suit

This job is ideal for someone with the commitment and desire to help people. The role needs empathy and the ability to understand people.

### Likely employer types

- The main clearing banks
- Local authorities
- Business Links
- Specialist agencies such as the Design Council

Jobs are advertised in the local press, and sometimes in the national press.

## Did you know?

It's a job that lets you talk to different people every day. You'll never be stuck for variety or interest.

## How many jobs available?

The exact number of jobs available is unknown, but there is plenty of demand for this role.

## Number of people employed in this field

There are between 350 and 400 business development officers working across London alone in business support organisations.

## More information

- England's Regional Development Agencies coordinate business support at a regional level, [www.englishrdas.com](http://www.englishrdas.com)
- British Chambers of Commerce represents business interests, [www.chamberonline.co.uk](http://www.chamberonline.co.uk)
- Business Link oversees local business support services, [www.businesslink.gov.uk](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk)



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